

# Welcome to Kindergarten: *Parent Handbook*



*"Our vision is for every individual to  
feel valued and for all learners to  
reach their full potential."*


## Welcome to Kindergarten!

*Dear Parents,*

*Starting school is an exciting time for most children. For some, however, it can be challenging as they transition from being at home to being in a school environment. In this year your child will have many experiences and opportunities to meet and work with other children as well as get used to the routines of school.*

*We hope to work with you to build upon all that you have taught your child at home during the last few years. This booklet is intended to help you and your child understand and prepare for this exciting new venture. We look forward to working with you over the years to come.*

*Yours Sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurie Meston".

**Laurie Meston**

**Deputy Superintendent/  
Elementary/Early Learning**

## What is Kindergarten?

In 2011/12 all Kindergarten programs in British Columbia became full-day. The Kindergarten program is designed especially to meet the needs of children at this age.

Learning for young children happens through activity. They will be involved in whole class, small group, partner and individual learning activities. Often this looks like play.

Through play, children learn coordination and movement skills, creativity and problem solving, and social interaction skills.

Structured play that is orchestrated by the teacher also provides children with the foundations for their academic learning. Through this kind of play, children ask questions, experiment with new ideas and materials, seek solutions and learn to think.



## Ways to Help Your Child Prepare for Kindergarten:

- ☐ Help your child recognize his/her own printed name.
- ☐ Handle books together. Teach respect for books and enjoyment of pictures. If your child asks what a word is, tell him or her. When reading, let your finger move from left to right with the printed word.
- ☐ Encourage your child to use small scissors, thick crayons, paints, pencils and chalk to develop fine motor skills.
- ☐ Encourage your child to have a good try at buttoning buttons, zippers and fasteners.
- ☐ Practice having your child say clearly when he/she needs to go to the washroom.
- ☐ If your child seems anxious about going to school, reassure him/her by talking happily about school and show no anxiety yourself about the new venture.
- ☐ Find opportunities in your daily life to draw attention to:
  - ☐ Letter names and simple words such as signs, labels on food boxes, etc
  - ☐ Letter sounds at the beginning of words by playing, “I spy” with sounds.
  - ☐ Numbers such as counting out cookies, pennies for the store.
  - ☐ Colour names of clothing or crayons and paints when colouring



## Your Child's Health is Important

Please help your child:

- ☐ Get enough sleep (10 – 12 hours)
- ☐ Eat a balanced diet (especially breakfast)
- ☐ Develop habits of cleanliness and independent personal hygiene
- ☐ Have eyesight, hearing, teeth and general health checked before school begins
- ☐ Update their immunization
- ☐ Keep them at home when they are ill (phone the school and let them know of their absence.)

## Typical Home Responsibilities For Five Year Olds:

- ☐ Making their own bed and keeping room tidy
- ☐ Dressing on own and choosing own clothes for the day
- ☐ Answering the telephone and beginning to dial the phone
- ☐ Taking out the garbage
- ☐ Helping set the table
- ☐ Putting on their shoes
- ☐ Cleaning up after snack
- ☐ Separating clothes for wash into colour piles
- ☐ Putting toys away

## How can I help my child?

**Be Positive:** support and encourage your child

**Do activities together** that use large muscle groups dramatize stories, playground activities and activities that use small muscle groups make cookies.

**Take trips** into the community in order to enrich your child's experience and language (a park, a museum, a farm, a factory, the airport, ...)

**Go to the library** regularly and borrow books and cassettes, watch films, listen to stories and participate in the various activities they offer for children.

**Communicate** regularly with the teacher to learn as much as possible about what your child is doing in school.

## Did you know?

Research shows that the more parents are involved in their child's education the more successful the child is at school. Your participation in the school is welcomed.

Here are some ways you can become involved:

- ☐ Visit your child's school and get to know your child's teachers and principal
- ☐ Share information about your child
- ☐ Support your child's learning through activities outside of school, for example, read together every night.
- ☐ Volunteer to help with school and classroom activities. Ask about ways you can help the teacher at home if you can't volunteer at the school.
- ☐ Volunteer to visit the classroom to share special skills, talents, hobbies, and crafts.
- ☐ Attend the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings at your school.

## Safety of Your Child at School

Your child will be greeted at the door each morning by his/her teacher. Children are supervised in their class by their teacher and by other teachers when they are ready to join the other children on the playground at recess.

Each school has a Phone Home Program that will contact you if your child does not come to school and if you have not informed the school of his/her absence. It is very important that you DO phone the school and leave a message that your child will be away or late.

It is also common for each Kindergarten teacher to want to know your specific pick up arrangements for your child so they can help monitor student safety. Please let the teachers know what your arrangements are and if these plans change.

Being able to reach you in the event of an emergency is also important to the school. Please be sure to leave some contact numbers for your family.

Our goal is to work with you to provide a caring and safe environment for your child.





## Goals of the Primary Program:

*The Primary Program addresses the development of the whole child by providing experiences in five areas:*

### 1. Intellectual Development:

- ☐ Develop thinking and learning strategies
- ☐ Develop an awareness of language and literacy
- ☐ Develop listening, speaking, reading and viewing abilities
- ☐ Develop writing and representing (drawing) abilities
- ☐ Develop number, spatial, and statistical sense
- ☐ Develop a sense of relationships and patterns
- ☐ Develop an understanding of the world around them

### 2. Aesthetic and Artistic Development:

- ☐ Develop enthusiasm and appreciation of the arts
- ☐ Participate in art, drama, musical activities

### 3. Emotional and Social Development:

- ☐ Develop a positive and realistic self-concept
- ☐ Develop independence
- ☐ Share, co-operate and learn from others

### 4. Physical Development and Well-Being:

- ☐ Learn and practice safety
- ☐ Take care of and respect his or her body
- ☐ Participate in and enjoy movement

### 5. Development of Social Responsibility:

- ☐ Respect and value people who are different than oneself
- ☐ Work with others
- ☐ Develop an awareness of the roles and responsibilities of members of a community